an eco-friendly approach for minimizing the use of chemical pesticides and encompasses biological, cultural and mechanical methods for controlling the diseases. Training is imparted to master trainers, agriculture extension officers and farmers to improve their efficiency, skill and knowledge in plant protection.

Production of foodgrains

3549. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether production of foodgrains is estimated to touch the 81 lakh tonnes mark despite unfavourable weather conditions;

(b) if so, whether production of oilseeds is estimated to be 40 lakh tonnes;

(c) whether drought has adversely affected Kharif crops in various parts of the country; and

(d) if so, to what extent the foodgrains production would be sufficient to meet the needs of the country?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) The production of Kharif 2001 has not yet been assessed. However, according to the latest advance estimates, the production of foodgrains and oilseeds in 2000-01 is expected to be 196.07 million tonnes and 18.20 million tonnes respectively. The production of both foodgrains and oilseeds during 2000-01 is expected to be lower than those of the preceding year due to aberrant weather conditions.

(d) In the crop year 1999-2000, as against the normative requirement of 196.42 million tonnes of foodgrains, the production of foodgrains was 208.87 million tonnes.

Freeing the drug pricing and distribution control

3550. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to free the pricing and distribution controls in the new drug policy and that the pricing controls would be used only for a few endemic diseases like TB, etc.;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the new decision would adversely affect the poor and the medium working classes; and